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Notes on a scandal: the official enquiry into deviance and corruption in New Zealand police.

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Abstract

Since 2004, the New Zealand Police Service has been engulfed by a series of scandals relating to allegations that officers have committed rape and sexual assault and conducted inappropriate sexual relations with vulnerable people. Moreover, it has been claimed that other officers engaged in corrupt practices to thwart the investigation and prosecution of criminal behaviour of police officers. In 2007, a Commission of Inquiry report established a program of reform intended to shape the future direction of the police service. This article provides an overview of these scandals, the context in which they have emerged, and the political and policing response to them. The analysis contained in the Commission report is compared with that offered by comparable investigations of police deviance and corruption in other countries. The methodological and conceptual limitations of the Commission are outlined and the prospects of the recommendations are considered.

Keywords: corruption, police reform, deviance, misconduct, ethics